

To: Crystal Lake Steering Committee

From: Nora Beck, Ricardo Lopez, and Kate Evasic; CMAP

Re: Outcomes of the Visioning Workshop, June 24, 2015

Date: June 30, 2015

The Visioning Workshop of the Crystal Lake Transportation Planning Process was held on Wednesday, June 24 at 6:30 pm in the Park District's Park Place Banquet Hall. There were approximately 20 people in attendance, including several members of the steering committee. The following is a brief summary of the agenda and information gathered at the meeting.

1. Format

The visioning workshop was designed to solicit information on how residents view existing streets and what types of facilities they think are appropriate for their community. After a presentation on the project process, a review of the main findings of the existing conditions report, and a summary of some design concepts to consider, the participants were divided into four working groups. The groups reviewed 5 different street segments in the community and worked through a booklet that asked them questions about the purpose of the street and the amenities they would like to see there. After the exercise, the groups reconvened and stepped through a voting exercise where they reviewed key concepts that could inform the goals of the transportation plan.

2. Results**a. Street Typologies****Ackman Road**

Participants agreed that Ackman Road is a suburban residential collector that serves as a link to and from the adjacent subdivisions and the city's major arterial streets. The road experiences some traffic congestion at rush hour and is primarily designed for vehicles. Some participants thought the speed limit could be reduced slightly to 40 mph to make the road more pedestrian friendly, especially at the intersections, while still maintaining adequate traffic flow.

The preferred features identified by the participants focused primarily on improving crossings for pedestrians. Currently the intersection at Golf Course Rd is the only signalized crossing within this road segment. A combination of intersection treatments were identified as necessary to ensure that pedestrians will be safe when crossing the street and to make sure that vehicles will yield to them. While constructing a pedestrian bridge seemed like an ideal solution, it was viewed as too expensive and therefore unfeasible. Participants identified pedestrian beacons, pedestrian refuge islands, and highly visible crosswalks at specific locations such as Ackman and Amberwood Drive to connect the north side of Ackman Road with Woods Creek Park. Residents also voiced a desire to widen the off-street trail to 10 feet and to provide bus transit. Other roads in Crystal Lake that participants believed share a similar purpose and preferred design features as Ackman Road include Miller Road, Pyott Road, and IL 176 in the residential section east of Walkup Road.

Main Street

Participants generally agreed that Main Street has a context that includes both urban and suburban characteristics and that it serves as a link between downtown and US 14. The nearby land uses, mainly residential and commercial, do contain some institutional destinations – schools, churches, and the post office. Participants found it odd that the existing speed limit was posted higher than US 14. The preferred features identified by the participants focused primarily on improving crossings for pedestrians as well as pedestrian access to the destinations on the street. In addition to pedestrian

beacons and high visibility crosswalks, participants identified issues at the intersection of Main Street and Commonwealth Drive – where there is the Prairie Trail yet no connecting sidewalks to the nearby commercial destinations, such as Jewel. In addition, one group identified the potential of a roundabout at the intersection of Main Street and Crystal Lake Avenue. Additional conversations with participants focused on connecting Walkup Road to Teckler Blvd to redistribute and provide a more direct route for the traffic coming from the south to go to Central High School.

Northwest Highway

Participants identified the context of this street as largely suburban commercial, but did note the large open space as well as industrial land uses nearby. They also noted how the street is both a link and a destination in and of itself. Predominately, participants noted that the modal priority is for cars. They had a hard time envisioning the usefulness of additional pedestrian amenities on this street without redevelopment of the existing buildings so that they too are designed to be pedestrian-friendly. Even if redeveloped, participants wondered if it would make more sense to build more traditional urban commercial development (describing lifestyle centers) on the existing parcels and focusing attention to pedestrian facilities within instead of forcing such amenities directly within the Northwest Highway right-of-way. That said, participants did see value in improving and adding crossings, with high-visibility crosswalks and pedestrian countdowns, and support for shared use paths. In the future, under further redevelopment, sidewalk cafes were seen as a desirable feature.

Brink Street

Situated in downtown Crystal Lake, participants described Brink Street as part of the urban center zone. Its surrounding land use transitions from residential use on the west end to entirely commercial with an abundance of parking lots to the east. Participants described Brink Street as a secondary “main street” that could be a destination within the larger downtown area. At a smaller scale they noted its importance as a link to connect people to Williams Street. Participants find the street to be pleasant in its current conditions; however, they agreed that small improvements could be made to make it more pedestrian friendly, with priority given to the east end of the street. Specific facilities recommended by the participants included signage and wayfinding and increasing traffic enforcement at intersections.

McHenry Avenue

The surrounding context of McHenry Avenue is still suburban; however, participants acknowledged that it is slightly more urban with smaller blocks and more connected streets than Ackman Road. The road serves as a link between destinations along Randall/Rakow Roads and U.S. 14 and to Crystal Lake’s downtown. Many saw it as the main entrance into the City. In addition to linking destinations, four schools are located along or just off of McHenry Avenue. Participants discussed current issues along the street which include congestion, particularly on weekends heading south to Randall Road, pedestrian circulation, and inadequate snow maintenance which makes the sidewalks impassible in winter months. Others mentioned how traffic can be slowed down by people pulling in and out of residential driveways. They also noted how US 14 is given signal priority at the intersection of McHenry Avenue and US 14. Often, cars can queue behind this light, which can cause access problems for the adjacent residential properties. Participants also discussed the recent resurfacing and wished that on-street parking had not been re-installed, though they admitted was fairly well utilized; instead, a left-turn median lane was seen as an important way to maintain traffic flow.

The preferred facilities identified for this street focus on making the street more sustainable and pedestrian friendly. Specific design features include: parkway rain gardens or stormwater bumpouts, street trees, sidewalk with parkway, pedestrian countdown, pedestrian beacon, and curb extensions for

the side streets. On-street parking was also recommended in certain locations and for other locations, a left-turn lane median was preferred.

Table 1. Summary of Street Characteristics

Street Name	Context Zone	Land Use	Purpose	Mode Priority	Speed	Congestion
Ackman Rd	Suburban	Residential, Open Space	Link	Auto >Ped>Bike/Transit>Goods	40-45	Low to Moderate
Main St	Suburban	Commercial, Institutional	Link	Auto >Ped>Bike/Transit>Goods	na	Moderate
Northwest Hwy	Suburban	Commercial, Industrial	Destination & Link	Auto>Transit>Goods>Bike>Ped	35	Moderate to High
Brink St	Urban Center	Commercial, Residential	Destination & Link	Ped >Auto/Bike>Transit>Goods	20	Moderate
McHenry Ave	Suburban	Res, Inst, with some Com, OS and Vac	Link	Auto >Transit>Ped/Bike>Goods Auto >Ped>Bike>Transit>Goods	30	Moderate

3. Vision and Goals

Participants largely reaffirmed the existing goals in the City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan, see Table 2. In addition, several other ideas were tested out on the group, summarized in Table 3. Among the top ideas that participants felt were very important included, design and build Crystal Lake's streets so that they improve drivers, transit rider, bicyclist, and pedestrian safety (92% of participants). In addition, 84% of participants would like to design and build Crystal Lake's streets so that they are sustainable, reduce environmental impacts, and improve water quality; and so that they are bicycle-friendly, walkable, and safe for a wide range of users, see Table 3.

Table 2. Key Concept Results

Vision Statements:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
To provide a comprehensive transportation system to safely and efficiently serve current and future land uses, considering travel by road, rail, public transportation, bicycle and foot.	84%	8%	8%	0%	0%
Promote the City's two Metra Stations including the development of increased residential density and commercial opportunities adjacent to them.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%
A transportation network which includes both automobile and alternative modes of transportation that is planned in conjunction with development and conscientious of natural resources or other site features.	64%	18%	18%	0%	33%

Table 3. Participant Goal Results

How important is it to design and build Crystal Lake's streets so that	Very important	Somewhat important	Neutral	Somewhat unimportant	Not important at all
they improve drivers, transit rider, bicyclist, and pedestrian safety?	92%	8%	0%	0%	0%
they are sustainable, reduce environmental impacts, and improve water quality?	84%	8%	8%	0%	0%
they are bicycle-friendly, walkable, and safe for a wide range of users?	84%	8%	0%	0%	8%
allow all residents to travel within Crystal Lake in safe, dignified, and efficient manner?	75%	17%	8%	0%	0%
allow people to choose how to travel within the city?	73%	27%	0%	0%	0%
encourage and promote healthier, more active lifestyles?	58%	25%	17%	0%	0%
automobile congestion is reduced along major arterials?	46%	18%	27%	9%	0%
support greater interaction and community identity?	36%	46%	9%	9%	0%
attract and sustain economic activity and increase property values?	17%	50%	33%	0%	0%

4. Participant Demographics

Basic demographic information – age and race/ethnicity –was requested from meeting attendees to get a sense of how representative the group was of the Crystal Lake community. Only 12 attendees responded to the demographic questions. Overall, the meeting attendees were older and more identified as White than the community at large.

What is your age? (multiple choice)	Responses	
Less than 19	0	0%
20 – 34	1	8%
35 – 49	4	33%
50 – 64	2	17%
65+	5	42%
Total counts	12	100%

What is your race or ethnicity (multiple choice)	Responses	
African American/Black	0	0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0%
Hispanic/Latino	0	0%

White	10	83%
Other	2	17%
Total counts	12	100%

What is your preferred mode of travel to work? <i>(multiple choice)</i>	Responses	
Drive alone	2	17%
Carpool	1	8%
Metra	3	25%
Pace	0	0%
Bike	1	8%
Walk	5	42%
Other	0	0%
Total counts	12	100%